

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES
(Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council)

Chairman: Mr. Timothy J. Callanan, District No. 2

A **meeting** of the Committee on Community Services, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, was held on **Monday, February 14, 2011**, in the Assembly Room of the Berkeley County Administration Building, 1003 Highway 52, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, at 6:57 p.m.

PRESENT: Acting Chairman Committee Member Dennis L. Fish, Council District No. 5; Committee Member Committee Member Robert O. Call, Jr., Council District No. 3; Committee Member Cathy S. Davis, Council District No. 4; Committee Member Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., Council District No. 7; Supervisor Daniel W. Davis; Ms. Nicole Ewing, County Attorney; and Ms. Barbara B. Austin, Clerk of County Council. Chairman Timothy J. Callanan, Council District No. 2 was excused.

ALSO PRESENT: Council Member Phillip Farley, District No. 1, ex officio; Council Member Jack Schurlknight, District No. 6, ex officio; Council Member Steve Davis, District No. 8, ex officio.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the electronic and print media were duly notified.

Acting Chairman Fish: "I'd like to call the Committee on Community Services to order. First item on the agenda this evening is the approval of minutes from January 24, 2011."

Committee Member Pinckney: "So move"

Committee Member C. Davis: "Second"

Acting Chairman Fish: "We have a motion and a second. Are there any changes or corrections to these minutes? (No Response) If not, all in favor signify by saying Aye? (Ayes) Opposes Nay? (No Response) The minutes stand approved as presented."

It was moved by Committee Member Pinckney and seconded by Committee Member C. Davis to **approve** the minutes as presented. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

A. Ms. Donna Osborne, Director of Berkeley County Library System, Re: State-of-the-Library Report.

Ms. Osborne: "Good evening members of Council. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to provide an update on what the Library has been up to in the last six to eight months. In your packet you received several documents and one of those documents had to do

with the Unique Management Services Recovery. I wanted to give you an update if I could just pass this around. This goes through the end of January. It gives you more information as to our collection services so far with them. One of the most important things that we've undertaken during this past year is to begin a collaboration with this agency. This agency, Unique Management Services, works with libraries across the United States to help them get back long overdue materials and unpaid fines. They are not a billing service. We still do our overdues. But they are an agency that works the individual account holders who have not returned long overdue materials or paid fines. As you can see, we've been with them since August of 2010 and as of January 31st we have submitted 1,168 accounts. Those are delinquent accounts. So far we collected in dollars, \$4,568.79. Materials returned is \$19,843.20. We feel like this has been a good partnership with them and we are very pleased with the way they have been able to encourage people to get back to the library and settle up with us. Does anyone have any questions about that particular partnership? (No Response) I would like to point out that Charleston County, Dorchester County, Spartanburg, Greenville and several other counties in South Carolina use their services. One of the things that have been so convenient about this is that our new Integrated Library System, that you all approved purchase of in 2009, automatically identifies those delinquent accounts and sends them without staff intervention to this company. So it doesn't take any extra staff time. I would also like to point out to you that in the three and one half years that I have been with the County system, we have made some major changes and some of those have been driven by budget and some of them have been driven by a change in philosophy. What has happened in the last three years is that our circulation has increased by 90%. That's in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010. We started at 358,000 when I was here. We are now at 688,000. As you all know, we've taken some severe budget cuts with the State. When I came here our per capita allowance with the State was \$2.25. We are now at \$.96 per capita. It looks very promising that we will lose even more for this next budget year. We've been doing more with less. Yes, Jack, did you have a question?"

Council Member Schurlknight: "I just had a quick question. I was kinda curious about the volunteers at the library. Are you seeing more people wanting to volunteer, pitching in, so to speak, help you...."

Ms. Osborne: "On an average, we use volunteers up to about 200 hours a month. So we have volunteers in Moncks Corner in our administrative services in Daniel Island and Goose Creek."

Council Member Schurlknight: "Right, I know my wife, she is a school teacher, so I'm involved in that also. Also with like Marietta Hicks with the Roscoe Reading Program. I've seen a lot of the kids really trying to do good to get books to read. Reading is very important for those kids and I'm just happy to hear that other people are volunteering to help with those children to get them those books and the information they need and lay their foundations. It's a big need out there for it."

Ms. Osborne: "Oh yes. At the Daniel Island Library we have two or three volunteers right now. Two of them are very interested in helping with the children after school. The Library sits right next door to a school full of...I think their student population is 1,250 now."

Council Member Schurlknight: "If I can be of any help in recruiting volunteers, please call me."

Ms. Osborne: "Oh, I will. Thank you so much. We have begun in April of 2010, a partnership with six or seven other library systems in South Carolina to provide free downloads of audio books and e-books to customers. This is proven to be a very, very popular service. We are partnering with Dorchester and Florence and Greenwood and Calhoun, Williamsburg and Kershaw and Orangeburg. We lead them in the number of circulations and usage."

Committee Member Call: "Mr. Chairman?"

Acting Chairman Fish: "Yes Mr. Call"

Committee Member Call: "Since this is a State of the Library report, I guess any questions are germane. I talked to Ms. Osborne about this several weeks ago, this Nook from Barnes and Noble I believe is one of the things that she is talking about, electronic downloads. If you have one of these and a library card, you can just go on line and download a book from these people that you have, these libraries that you have a reciprocal agreement with, without even going to the library. Is that the way it works?"

Ms. Osborne: "That is correct."

Committee Member Call: "That's wonderful. That is absolutely wonderful."

Ms. Osborne: "It is very convenient. You can do it 24/7."

Committee Member Call: "It is just unbelievable. I wish that would do it for the Amazon. Would you speak for a minute to the library foundation? Would you give us an overview of that?"

Ms. Osborne: "When I was hired, the Board of Trustees asked me if I'd had any experience in building a Foundation. The system I was associated with before I came here had done a lot of work in that area. They had begun a Foundation. So, when I got here there were other things that staff and I wanted to do, so we had to put that as a lower priority and we have now undertaken that. We have formed with a group of community stakeholders. You are one of them, Mr. Davis is one. With members from the various communities throughout the county, meeting on a regular basis to look the support throughout the county for a library foundation. That would mean that the library could begin a foundation, work with an agency normally, some non-profits and quasi government agencies work with the Coastal Community Foundation to administer and administrate these funds. So we can build an endowment. We recognize, as do many other libraries across the United States, that if we want to be better than a good library system, then we need a foundation on which to draw. When we go through these severe budgetary cuts, then we have a rainy day fund to call on."

Committee Member Call: "Basically, we haven't had a vehicle for philanthropic organizations to donate to a trust fund or an endowment fund."

Ms. Osborne: "Right, now we...."

Committee Member Call: "That is what this library foundation will...."

Ms. Osborne: "It creates a separate fund where there is the principal that isn't touched. It is just like a trust fund, you live off the interest. It's set up to be designed for just that, you have special projects or special needs or something like a university, when I was at the last library system, they decided to endow a particular position for local history and genealogy."

Committee Member Call: "I thought I just had two questions. Let me ask one more about this Unique Management Services. You have an item here, Material Returned \$19,843. That's materials, that is the value of material that would have been lost were it not for.....so, the fine, I guess that is \$4,500 in fines. Is that what that figure is above that? If we had lost just the materials that the fines were owed on, that would be almost \$20,000 that the library would have just lost. Is that correct?"

Ms. Osborne: "That is correct. Almost \$25,000."

Committee Member Call: "Thank you. I think they have done an excellent job."

Ms. Osborne: "We are very pleased with that service. Do you have any other questions for me at this time?"

Acting Chairman Fish: "Ms. Osborne, thank you so much. When I look at these numbers, the percent change in terms of circulation, number of users, number of people, I've got to commend you and your volunteers and your staff, with the budget cuts. It is a phenomenal job. You truly are an asset to this county and the kids and I commend you for that."

Ms. Osborne: "Thank you. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff and the people of the community and other like-minded organizations with whom partnerships have made this all possible. There is one more thing that I want to give you and then I will leave. We have done a lot of work with Work Force Development, the Employment Division throughout the County. What we are finding is that at least 50% of the people that we are seeing on a daily basis are in our libraries because they are job hunting. They are creating resumes. They are going back to school. They are using their time in the library to engage in distance learning and career development. We are glad that we can be there for them."

Committee Member Call: "Mr. Chairman"

Acting Chairman Fish: "Mr. Call"

Committee Member Call: "One more comment. I don't know how many other organizations, but the library does make available space on a monthly basis that people can come here to this building to apply for their Social Security benefits. The Social Security representative drives here saving people probably another 30 miles into the Social Security office in Charleston. I think that is a really valuable service to the people of Berkeley County. They come to Moncks Corner instead of going all the way down to West Ashley. I don't know how many other things you do like that....."

Ms. Osborne: "We see a lot of people who come in for what are called e-services. Those are government services and we've gotten...staff have gotten pretty good at helping them navigate through some of these..."

Committee Member Call: "I went through it over there and it is very easy. The gentleman was very knowledgeable and that was my only contact with the Social Security people face to face. Everything else was handled from my one meeting over there in the library next door. Thank you, Mr. Fish."

Acting Chairman Fish: "I have a question for you. This brings up because of what I do for a living is a big push for people to go online and do their tax returns if they have lower income. You provide that service as well?"

Ms. Osborne: "We provide them access. They can come in and do their taxes online. This is the first year that the Federal Government has not mailed the paper tax forms. There are still a number of people who want that paper. We are now the only place in town to get those paper tax forms."

Acting Chairman Fish: "When they do their return, can they print it now, you are saying, or you don't...:

Ms. Osborne: "Yes"

Acting Chairman Fish: "I don't think that is widely known. That might be something that might be put out there as another opportunity. I see it from different places with VIDA and other places to provide that service, but I don't think a lot of people are aware that the library provides that."

Council Member S. Davis: "(Inaudible) the Postal Services provide that"

Ms. Osborne: "And they are out of that now completely. Even before the 1st of January, people were in asking for State and Federal tax forms."

Council Member Farley: (Inaudible)

Ms. Osborne: "I was just reading an article today about predicting where libraries are going to be in a few years, 10 years from now. I've been in the profession long enough now to

think back 10 or 15 years ago when computers were going to eliminate the need for libraries. Here we are 15 years later and what I see are evolving services. I think that libraries are going to become more and more that community place where people come to navigate through all these different resources. When someone gets a Nook or a Sony Reader or something else, who do they call or where do they come? When they need to understand how to navigate some of the e-services such as Social Security. Right now people are learning that if they become unemployed, they have three weeks in which to do all of their paperwork online or they lose those benefits and where are they coming? They are coming to the library. Staff are learning and what they are doing is helping people navigate that. Google is absolutely fantastic but when you google a subject and you look at the number of responses, how do you know? How do you know which one is the authoritative resource. That is what I see us doing, more and more. I think we are going to be providing more space for people to come in and hookup. The libraries are getting smaller. Not immediately there are still many, many people who like that physical touch, that book, that they can hold. I think that what it is going to become is more of a community gathering place. We are starting to see that.”

Acting Chairman Fish: “Any comments or questions? (No Response)”

Council Member Schurlknight: “Thank you, Donna”

Committee Member Call: “Great job.”

(Inaudible)

Committee Member Farley: “So move.”

Committee Member C. Davis: “Second”

Acting Chairman Fish: “(Inaudible) (Ayes) (Inaudible)”

It was moved by Committee Member Farley and seconded by Committee Member C. Davis to **adjourn** the Community Services meeting. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 7:17 pm.

April 11, 2011

Date Approved

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Chairman: Mr. Timothy J. Callanan, District No. 2

Members: Mr. Robert O. Call, Jr., District No. 3
Mrs. Cathy Davis, District No. 4
Mr. Dennis Fish, District No. 5
Mr. Caldwell Pinckney, District No. 7

Mr. Phillip Farley, District No. 1, ex officio
Mr. Jack Schurlknight, District No. 6, ex officio
Mr. Steve C. Davis, District No. 8, ex officio
Mr. Daniel W. Davis, Supervisor, ex officio

A **meeting** of the **COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, will be held on **Monday February 14, 2011**, at **6:02 p.m.**, following other scheduled committee meetings in the Assembly Room, Berkeley County Administration Building, 1003 Highway 52, Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 24, 2011

A. Ms. Donna Osborne, Director of Berkeley County Library System, Re: State-of-the-Library Report.

February 9, 2011
S/Barbara B. Austin, CCC
Clerk of County Council